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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE  
10 May 1962

OCI No. 1868/62

Copy No.

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Expansion of Bloc Civil Air Routes in Africa

A. Bloc Intentions

1. The USSR in the past few months has stepped up its drive to extend its international air routes to countries in Africa and Latin America. Moscow now has concluded civil air agreements with Morocco, Mali, Guinea and Ghana, and negotiations with the Sudan are in progress. The Soviet airline Aeroflot at present services only European, Middle Eastern, and Asian countries. Czechoslovakia, for the past two years the most active bloc country in the civil aviation field, is already flying to several West African countries, as well as the Middle East and Asia.

2. According to the Soviet-Sudanese air agreement, initialed but not yet approved by the Sudan, Aeroflot proposes to fly one route from Khartoum to West African countries and another to East Africa. There also are indications that the agreement includes additional "beyond rights" for a route to Brazil. Moscow may be planning to fly to Recife and Rio de Janeiro from one of the intermediate points on its West African route, probably either Accra or Conakry.

3. The USSR probably hopes to begin regular service in the near future on the West African coastal route to Rabat, Bamako, Conakry, Accra, and Lagos, presumably with technical landing rights at Dakar. Aeroflot would need only Lagos landing and overflight rights from Nigeria, and overflight for Chad, in order to link this service with Khartoum. There is no indication that

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Moscow has requested such rights from Nigeria to date, but Soviet interest in overflight rights for Chad has been conveyed to Foreign Ministry officials in Fort Lamy. Moscow apparently indicated to President Tom-balbaye of Chad that Aeroflot would prefer to fly from Bamako and points west directly over Niger and Chad to Khartoum, rather than over Nigeria. Air transit rights over Niger have been requested by the USSR but not yet granted.

4. The other route proposed by Aeroflot under the Sudanese agreement would link Khartoum with points in Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, the Somali Republic, Kenya, and the Malagasy Republic. Aeroflot may encounter difficulties in establishing this route, since air agreements have not been signed with any of these countries and some may be reluctant to negotiate. The Soviet delegation in Khartoum reportedly plans to proceed to Somali and Tanganyika; however, officials there have received no notice of an impending visit by this delegation. The USSR has, however, made an oral request to the Somali Republic for air traffic rights.

5. The Soviet-Sudanese civil air agreement contains most of the provisions standard in Aeroflot's agreement with other nonbloc countries. It provides the usual safeguards against the carrying of photographic equipment and munitions, and the passengers, crew, and cargo are subject to the country's laws pertaining to passports, customs, currency, and quarantine. The agreement also has provisos which protect the routes serviced by Sudan Airways. Fees and charges of Soviet aircraft will be in accordance with Sudanese rates and tariffs, thus minimizing possible disregard for International Air Transport Association rates. The agreement also contains the normal provisions on flight safety which, although written without reference to the International Civil Aviation Organization, are based on its standards.

6. The recently concluded Soviet-Moroccan air agreement permitting Aeroflot to extend its existing Cairo route to Casablanca and from there to Central and South America paves the way for the inauguration of Soviet flights to Cuba, a route long desired by the USSR. Operation of the route, however, will require the negotiation of technical landing rights at intermediate points. The USSR, in an apparent move to make this

route operational, has approached Libya for overflight and landing rights.

7. At present, the Czechs have the only bloc airline flying to the western hemisphere. Other bloc countries--at present flying only to European countries--intend to expand their international networks. The Polish airline LOT, which will acquire five British Viscounts in the near future, has plans to open regular service to nine countries in the Middle East, Africa, and the Far East. Warsaw already has indicated an interest in concluding air agreements with Lebanon and Afghanistan.

8. The bloc undoubtedly views the expansion of its international air routes as a means of developing its prestige and respectability in the underdeveloped areas. Although not always economically profitable, regular air service from the bloc--particularly from Moscow and Prague--to countries where there are bloc aid programs facilitates the movement of bloc technical and military personnel needed for the implementation of these programs.

9. In addition to the expansion of its air routes, the USSR has provided assistance to the underdeveloped countries in the establishment and expansion of their own civil air facilities. Relatively large numbers of civil aircraft--both piston and high-performance turboprop--have been sold to Guinea, Ghana, Mali and Cuba. Moscow also is providing training for local personnel in the operation and maintenance of these aircraft.

#### B. African Reactions

1. Sudanese government officials at first regarded the Soviet request for a civil air agreement as routine and favored it as an opportunity to demonstrate once again the Sudan's "neutral" posture. (Sixteen non-bloc airlines now serve Khartoum.) President Abboud reportedly assured Brezhnev during his visit to the Sudan last July that the Sudan would be willing to consider a civil air agreement. In April negotiations in Khartoum reached the stage where Sudanese officials initialed a draft agreement. Strong representations by the US Embassy, however, have caused the Sudanese to delay final action on the agreement, and such key figures as the foreign

minister, communications minister and deputy army commander have indicated that if the US would give them the two Boeing 720-B aircraft they previously asked for, there would be no agreement with the Soviets. The US has instead offered assistance in other forms for the development and expansion of Sudan Airways and has hinted that aid may not be forthcoming for the Port Sudan-Khartoum road project if the Sudanese government signs the air agreement with the USSR.

2. Libyan officials have indicated they would welcome an opportunity to refuse the Soviet request to them, but that Libya cannot be a lone hold-out.

3. The Niger Minister of Public Works has reportedly recommended approval of the Soviet request to that country, and on 2 May President Diori expressed surprise when the US Ambassador explained US objections. Diori is now out of the country, and the acting president on 7 May told the French Ambassador that no action would be taken until Diori's return, sometime after 25 May. Judging from past performances, however, it is possible the leftist-oriented members of the Niger government may take advantage of Diori's absence to carry matters to the point where, upon his return, the President will lamely explain that he is powerless to prevent granting the Soviet request.

4. Elsewhere in the 12-nation Brazzaville group, however, Soviet requests for overflight or landing rights will be handicapped by the agreement which commits these states, in their separate Air Afrique organization, to mutual consultation before granting air rights to any outside state. The Foreign Ministers of both Upper Volta and the Malagasy Republic have indicated opposition to Soviet penetration.

5. President Tombalbaye of Chad has turned down the Soviet Union's request for diplomatic relations, which was made at same time as request for overflight rights, and told the Soviet ambassador to Mali that the overflight question was a matter for consultation with other Brazzaville powers. French officials believe Tombalbaye is using consultation as a device for stalling.

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6. Cameroon is flatly against consideration of Soviet overflight or landing rights as being contrary to basic Cameroon policy and violating its obligations to other Air Afrique countries.

7. Nigeria leans more toward the West than toward the bloc, but if the USSR does ask for a civil air agreement, Lagos might feel that in the interests of Nigerian "independence" and balance between East and West it would have to consider a Soviet request favorably.

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Bloc Civil Air Transport Agreements With Non-Bloc Countries

(Date) - Agreement exists.

N - Agreement is under negotiation.

P - Agreement has been proposed.

	USSR	Czecho-slovakia	Poland	Hungary	Bulgaria	Rumania	Communist China
Afghanistan	(1956)	(1960)					
Austria	(1955)	(1952)	(1956)	(1958)	(1958)	(1958)	
Belgium	(1958)	(1956)	(1956)	(1957)	(1957)	(1956)	
Brazil	P		P	P			
Burma		(1961)	(1960)				(1955)
Canada			(1961)				
Cambodia			(1960)				N
Ceylon							(1959)
Cuba	"	(1960)					
Denmark	(1956)	(1947)	(1957)	(1958)	(1958)	(1958)	
Egypt	(1958)	(1958)	(1956)	(1958)	(1959)	(1958)	
Finland	(1955)	(1949)		(1962)			
France	(1958)	(1954)	(1960)	(1960)			
Germany (West)				(1960)	(1960)	(1961)	
Ghana	(1962)	(1961)		(1961)		(1962)	
Greece	P	(1946)	(1956)	(1962)		(1960)	
Guinea	(1962)	(1960)					
India	(1957)	(1960)		P			N
Indonesia	(1961)	(1960)					
Iran	P	(1961)					
Iraq			(1960)	(1961)	(1960)		
Ireland			(1947)				

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	<u>USSR</u>	<u>Czecho- slovakia</u>	<u>Poland</u>	<u>Hungary</u>	<u>Bulgaria</u>	<u>Rumania</u>	<u>Communist China</u>
Italy	P	(1960)			(1960)		
Japan	P						
Lebanon	P	(1961)	N				
Libya	P						
Mali		(1962)	(1961)				
Mexico	P	P					
Morocco	(1962)	(1961)					
Nether- lands	(1958)	(1947)	(1956)	(1957)	(1958)	(1957)	
Norway	(1956)	(1948)	(1961)		(1958)	(1958)	
Saudi Arabia		(1961)					
Senegal		(1960)					
Sudan	N	P					
Sweden	(1956)	(1957)	(1956)	(1957)	(1957)	(1957)	
Switzer- land	P	(1947)	(1959)	(1959)			(1960)
Syria	P	(1958)					
Turkey	(1961)	(1962)					
UK	(1957)	(1960)	(1957)	(1960)			
USA	P						
Yugo- slavia	(1955)	(1956)	(1955)	(1956)	(1955)	(1956)	

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